Vocabulary List:

The following vocabulary words are those most likely to be used when students visit Wind Cave National Park. They are included here for use by teachers and/or students. You may want to incorporate them into the spelling curriculum or use them for dictionary work prior to visiting the park. Students should leave Wind Cave National Park with an understanding of these words and concepts.

acid - a compound that reacts with a substance by eating or dissolving it away. For example: carbonic acid can dissolve limestone.

adaptation - a structure or behavior that enables a plant or animal to live successfully in its environment.

boxwork - a speleothem or cave decoration which is a fragile, honeycomb-shaped structure of calcite attached to the walls and ceilings of the cave.

camouflage - the coloring or characteristics of a plant or animal used to disguise or to conceal itself from an enemy.

carbon dioxide (CO₂) - a odorless, colorless gas formed by living or decaying plants and animals; the bubbles in soft drinks.

carnivore - a meat-eater; an animal that only eats animals.

classification - a system of arranging like things in groups.

dissolve - to disappear into a liquid.

ecology - the study of the interrelationships between living things and the relationships between organisms and their physical environment.

ecosystem - a living community of plants and animals and the physical environment (air, water, sunlight, soil) around them.

effect - to cause, to come into being; anything brought about by a cause.

environment - surroundings; all of the conditions surrounding and affecting the development of an organism.

exotic - foreign, introduced into an area where it does not naturally occur.

extinct - no longer in existence.

habitat - the place where a plant or animal lives.

herbivore - a plant-eater; an animal that only eats plants.

native - a plant or animal that occurs in a region naturally.

niche - an especially suitable place to live.

omnivore - an animal that eats both plants and animals.

predator - an animal that seizes and kills another animal for food.

preserve - to protect from harm or danger; a place where animals and plants are kept for protection.

prey - an animal that is seized by a predator.

system - a set or arrangement of things so related as to form a whole.

watertable - the level or depth in the ground where the rock is completely filled with water and there are no air spaces.